In the Claims:

1. – 30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended) A marketing assisting apparatus in which a plurality of customer terminal devices of customers and a plurality of salesperson terminal devices of salespersons in charge of said customers are interconnected over a network, and in which messages are communicated with said customer terminal devices and said salesperson terminal devices over said network; said apparatus comprising:

a plurality of customer databases each adapted for storage therein of a customer table to which private data of a customer has been entered;

a plurality of company databases each adapted for storage therein of a company table of a company, supervising a plurality of salespersons belonging to said company, a plurality of salesperson tables, each provided for each salesperson belonging to said company, and a selection registration table for correlating said customer tables and the salesperson tables to each other;

a selection registration section for accepting registration from said customer terminal device of identification data of the salesperson approved by said customer and for generating/holding the selection registration table correlating the salesperson table of the salesperson identified by said identification data with said customer table;

a message database for holding a message sent from said salesperson to said customer and a message sent from said customer to said salesperson;

retrieving means for retrieving the customer table correlated with said salesperson table by said selection registration table:

a salesperson side message interface for assisting in formulation of a message to said customer by said salesperson terminal device, with generation of said selection registration table as an incentive; said salesperson side message interface also reading out the message formulated by said customer from said message database and sending the message thus read out to said salesperson terminal device; and

a customer side message interface for reading out the message prepared by said salesperson from said message database to send the message thus read out to said customer terminal device, and for assisting in formulation of the message by said customer terminal device; wherein

at least one of said company databases is owned by a service provider; at least one of the salesperson tables of the company database of said service provider is correlated with the totality of customer tables correlated with the salesperson tables of the totality of said company databases, inclusive of said company database of said system provider, by said selection registration table; and wherein

at least one of the salesperson tables of each of the company databases excepting said company database of said system provider is a salesperson table belonging to a manager of each company; the salesperson table of said company manager is correlated with the totality of the customer tables correlated by said selection registration table;

said customer side message interface reading out a message concerning a specified one of the companies of said company databases excepting said company database of said system provider from said message database and transmitting the message read out over said network to the totality of customer tables correlated with said salesperson table of said service provider or to customer terminal devices of customer

tables extracted by said retrieving means subject to preset retrieving conditions; said

customer side message interface on receipt of an acknowledge message from each of said

customer terminal devices allowing said selection registration section to generate the

selection registration table correlating the salesperson table of said company manager of

said specified company with the customers of the sources of transmission of said

acknowledge messages;

said salesperson side message interface assisting in formulating messages to

customers of said customer tables extracted under said preset retrieving conditions by

said retrieving means from the totality of customer tables correlated with the salesperson

tables of the company managers of said companies, and allowing the messages

formulated to be stored in said message database; and

said customer side message interface transmitting the messages formulated to said

customer terminal devices, over said network, in the ~~naive~~ name of said company

managers or in the name of salespersons of said salesperson tables which are different

than those belonging to said company managers and which are correlated with said

customer tables; said salesperson side message interface transmitting the messages

formulated to salesperson terminal devices which are different than those belonging to

said company managers and which are correlated with said customer tables.

32. (Previously Presented) The marketing assisting apparatus according to claim

31 wherein the message transmitted to said customer in the name of the company

manager or in the names of salespersons of said salesperson tables which are different

than those belonging to said company managers includes a return message to the message from said customer.

33. (Previously Presented) The marketing assisting apparatus according to claim 31 wherein said salesperson side message interface makes display so that the messages transmitted/ received by said salespersons, directly in charge of said customers, of said salesperson tables different than those belonging to said company managers, may be distinguished by said salesperson terminal devices from the messages transmitted/ received by said company managers.

34. (Previously Presented) The marketing assisting apparatus according to claim 31 wherein said salesperson side message interface allows the salesperson terminal device belonging to said company manager of each company to browse the transmission/receipt hysteresis of messages with said customers of the totality of salespersons of the company databases excepting said company database of said system provider.

35. (Previously Presented) The marketing assisting apparatus according to claim 31 wherein said salesperson side message interface provides the salesperson terminal devices with customer-based use data over the network.

36. (Previously Presented) The marketing assisting apparatus according to claim 31 wherein said company databases excepting said company database of said system

provider group together a plurality of customer tables out of the totality of customer tables correlated with the salesperson tables of the company managers.

37. (Previously Presented) The marketing assisting apparatus according to claim 31 wherein said retrieving means includes

narrowing-down means having unread message extracting means for extracting unread messages in the name of each company manager or in the name of the salespersons of said salesperson tables which are different than those belonging to said company managers, and responding customer extracting means of extracting the customers whose messages to the company managers or to salespersons of the salesperson tables different than those belonging to said company managers have been received within a preset time;

customer name extracting means for extracting customers of interest based on all or part of customer names entered as the retrieving conditions;

said retrieving means extracting preset customers by said narrowing-down means and/or said customer name extracting means.

38. (Previously Presented) The marketing assisting apparatus according to claim 31 wherein said salesperson side message interface performs the processing of refraining from transmitting all messages in case it is unable to transmit the messages to all of said customers simultaneously.

39. (Previously Presented) The marketing assisting apparatus according to claim 31 wherein said customer side message interface displays on said customer terminal device the salespersons of the salesperson tables correlated with the totality of customer tables of the company databases other than the database of said service provider, provided that the salespersons displayed are not approved by said customer.

40. (Previously Presented) The marketing assisting apparatus according to claim 31 wherein, each time a new customer table is added to said salesperson tables different than those belonging to said company managers, said new customer table is added to said totality of customer tables correlated with the salesperson tables of said company managers.

41. – 52. (Cancelled)

53. (New) A marketing assisting method performed by a marketing assisting apparatus in which a plurality of customer terminal devices of customers and a plurality of salesperson terminal devices of salespersons in charge of the customers are connected via a network, and in which messages are communicated with the customer terminal devices and the salesperson devices over the network, the method comprising:

reading out a message by a customer side message interface, the message regarding a specified company in a company database, but not including a company database of a system provider, and transmitting the message over the network to customer tables correlated with a salesperson table of the system provider or to customer terminal devices of customer tables extracted according to preset retrieving conditions;

generating a selection registration table by a selection registration section, the

selection registration table correlating the salesperson table of a company manager of a

specified company with a customer who is a source of an acknowledge message from

each of the customer terminal devices, when a salesperson side message interface

receives the acknowledge message;

formulating messages by a salesperson side message interface to customers of the

customer tables extracted under the preset retrieving conditions, from the customer tables

correlated with the salesperson tables of company mangers, and allowing the messages

formulated to be stored in a message database; and

transmitting from a customer side message interface the messages formulated to

the customer terminal devices, over the network, in the name of the company managers

or in the same of salespersons of the salesperson tables which are different from tables

belonging to the company managers and which are correlated with the customer tables,

and transmitting messages formulated from the salesperson side message interface to

salesperson terminal devices which are different from the tables belonging to the

company managers and which are correlated with the customer tables.

54. (New) The marketing assisting method according to claim 53 wherein the

message transmitted to the customer in the name of the company manager or in the name

of salespersons of the salesperson tables which are different than those belonging to the

company managers includes a return message to the message from the customer.

55. (New) The marketing assisting method according to claim 53 wherein the salesperson side message interface formats the display so that the messages transmitted/received by the salespersons, directly in charge of the customers, of the salesperson tables different than those belonging to the company managers, can be distinguished from the messages transmitted/received by the company managers.

56. (New) The marketing assisting method according to claim 53 further comprising:

allowing the salesperson terminal device belonging to the company manager of each company to browse a transmission/ receipt list of messages with the customers of the salespersons of the company databases, not including the company database of the system provider.

57. (New) The marketing assisting method according to claim 53 further comprising:

providing the salesperson terminal devices with customer-based use data over the network.

58. (New) The marketing assisting method according to claim 53, wherein the company databases exclude the company database of the system provider, and group together the customer tables correlated with at least one salesperson table.

59. (New) The marketing assisting method according to claim 53 wherein extracting the customer tables comprises:

extracting unread messages in the name of each company manager or of the salespersons of the salesperson tables different from those belonging to the company managers, and extracting the customers whose messages to the company managers or to salespersons of the salesperson terminal devices are different from those belonging to the company managers which have been received within a preset time; and

extracting customers of interest based on all or part of customer names entered as retrieving conditions.

60. (New) The marketing assisting method according to claim 53 further comprising:

refraining from transmitting all messages when the side message interface is unable to transmit the messages to all of said customers simultaneously.

61. (New) The marketing assisting method according to claim 53 further comprising:

displaying on the customer terminal device the salespersons of the salesperson tables correlated with the customer tables of the company databases other than the company database of the service provider, provided that the salespersons displayed are not approved by said customer.

62. (New) The marketing assisting method according to claim 53 further comprising:

adding, each time a new customer table is added to the salesperson tables different from those belonging to the company managers, a new customer table to the customer tables correlated with said at least one salesperson table, except to the company database of the system provider.

63. (New) A computer readable medium and a set of instructions stored on the computer readable medium that, when executed by a marketing assisting computer apparatus, the computer apparatus having a plurality of customer terminal devices of customers and a plurality of salesperson terminal devices of salespersons in charge of the customers are connected via a network, and in which messages are communicated with the customer terminal devices and the salesperson devices over the network, cause the marketing assisting computer apparatus to execute the steps of:

reading out a message by a customer side message interface, the message regarding a specified company in a company database, but not including a company database of a system provider, and transmitting the message over the network to customer tables correlated with a salesperson table of the system provider or to customer terminal devices of customer tables extracted according to preset retrieving conditions;

generating a selection registration table by a selection registration section, the selection registration table correlating the salesperson table of a company manager of a specified company with a customer who is a source of an acknowledge message from

each of the customer terminal devices, when a salesperson side message interface

receives the acknowledge message;

formulating messages by a salesperson side message interface to customers of the

customer tables extracted under the preset retrieving conditions, from the customer tables

correlated with the salesperson tables of company mangers; and allowing the messages

formulated to be stored in a message database; and

transmitting from a customer side message interface the messages formulated to

the customer terminal devices, over the network, in the name of the company managers

or in the same of salespersons of the salesperson tables which are different from tables

belonging to the company managers and which are correlated with the customer tables,

and transmitting messages formulated from the salesperson side message interface to

salesperson terminal devices which are different from the tables belonging to the

company managers and which are correlated with the customer tables.